




FEMA
National Advisory Council

March 28, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: R. David Paulison
Administrator

FROM: G. Kemble Bennett 
Chairman
National Advisory Council

SUBJECT: FEMA Draft Strategic Plan Comments

Forwarded for your review is a consolidated list of comments made by the members of the National Advisory Council (NAC) regarding the FEMA Draft Strategic Plan.

The majority of comments were focused on the following categories:

- Goal 1: Integrated Approach to National Capabilities;
- Plan Implementation; and
- General Comments

The summary of comments is captured in this memorandum and all comments have been incorporated into a form for review by Policy and Program Analysis staff.

On behalf of the Council, we appreciate the opportunity to review and comment upon this critical document.

Category Goal 1: Integrated Approach to National Capabilities

Primary Issues

- Private sector should be a key partner in personal and community responsibility for preparedness.
- Should promote and help institutionalize standardized emergency response and business continuity plans.
- There needs to be a section on how to develop emergency managers.
- Strategies should be written in more definitive terms – as it is now, several read as if FEMA is going to tell local communities what to do, or do it for them.

Category Plan Implementation

Primary Issues

- Implementation plan needs to draw a map detailing the steps behind the concepts and the actions necessary to achieve the goals described in the plan.
- Success implementation metrics need to be included for each action in the implementation plan.
- How will the FEMA Component Strategic Plan be aligned at the Regional Level?
- Implementation plan should identify the financial, human, material, expertise and technology resources required and their sources.

Category General Comments

Primary Issues

- The Strategic Plan avoids the most important opportunity for failure for critical planning – plan feasibility.
- There are multiple references to “first responders, public and private sector...”, but it would be helpful if the document also used the word “first receivers” as a more inclusive term.
- The plan is well aligned with the right priorities and with noble goals.

Attachment: Strategic Plan Comments Form



FEMA Draft Strategic Plan Comment Form (for FEMA NAC) – February 2008

TOPIC	PAGE	COMMENTOR	COMMENT
Overall	n/a	Bob Connors	Overall, the strategic plan seems well aligned with the right priorities (congressional requirements and lessons learned) with some noble (and challenging) goals.
Overall	n/a	Bob Connors	Consider a graphic that depicts how this strategy will position FEMA to achieve its vision (e.g., a puzzle house or something similar that shows the foundation of FEMA values, the strategic objectives, and the vision).
Overarching Themes: Leadership	9	Bob Connors	<i>"Leaders with experience are the key."</i> I heard many comments from FEMA professionals in the field who felt there were too many managers/leaders who didn't understand the mission due to a lack of practical experience.
Goal 1: Integrated approach to national capabilities	13	Bob Connors	<i>"The private sector should be a key partner in personal and community responsibility for preparedness."</i> Their function should not just be to provide capabilities during incidents. There is a significant opportunity to engage the private sector at this level, especially in areas where they are the largest employers.
Goal 1: Integrated approach to national capabilities	16	Bob Connors	Should highlight the <i>national preparedness standard or standards</i> for preparedness as outlined in the Intelligence Reform & Terrorism Prevention Act (i.e., NFPA 1600) and other legislation. Should not only promote protection of critical infrastructure, but also <i>promote and help institutionalize standardized emergency response and business continuity plans</i> .
Goal 2: Assistance	26-27	Bob Connors	Focus more on <i>"adequate, safe, and healthy temporary/long-term housing"</i>
Goal 3: Information and Communication	29	Bob Connors	<u>Strategy</u> is used incorrectly in a few other areas (bullet title and in the strategy description). Should revise to avoid redundancy and confusion (e.g. comprehensive emergency management information "strategy" to "process").
Appendix A: Goals and Objectives	47	Bob Connors	May want to rank order the objectives (if they aren't). Possibly add a roadmap/timeline, and what organization within FEMA will provide leadership to execute.
Overall	n/a	Joe Bruno	This Strategic Plan reflects comprehension of and insight into the emergency management landscape in the US today, including all levels of government and the private sector. The Strategic Plan makes clear that FEMA understands the gaps in its system as well as its



FEMA Draft Strategic Plan

Comment Form (for FEMA NAC) – February 2008

FEMA

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Overall	n/a	Joe Bruno	enormous resources and strengths. The Strategic Plan falls short in one critical area. It avoids the most important opportunity for failure for critical planning - plan feasibility.
Overall	n/a	Joe Bruno	We need FEMA to assume its leadership role, to set standards and drive change. We need a FEMA focused on core competencies and operational planning; a FEMA with the ability to effectively manage information and resources; a FEMA that is customer-focused, data-driven and accountable. Once a destination is chosen, a clear road map is needed to get there. This Strategic Plan needs to draw the map, i.e., it needs the details behind the concepts. The implementation plan should describe the actions necessary to achieve the goals described in the Plan. The implementation plan should include success implementation metrics for each action; describe how each will be achieved and who is responsible to carry each action out. The implementation plan should include a project plan and identify and sequence interdependent and critical tasks. The implementation plan should identify the financial, human, material, expertise and technology resources required and their sources. The implementation plan should identify contingencies, responsibilities and timeframes (i.e., action plans and schedules with start dates and duration) and should identify the methods for monitoring and control. In sum and substance, this plan must show its operational integrity and eschew "concepts of operation" (CONOPS) over operational planning. Until very recently, FEMA had two primary weaknesses: leadership and ideas. Administrator Paulison and Admiral Johnson have filled the leadership gap and FEMA has had some significant successes over the past two years by working harder and smarter. But, rather than a "new" FEMA this may still be the old FEMA that hustles. Admiral Johnson is now proposing to fulfill the promise of a "new" FEMA. The goal of this plan is no less than a fundamental transformation of the agency.
Overall	n/a	Jim Paturas	Throughout the document there are multiple references to "... first responders, public and private sector....". It would be helpful if the document also used the word "first receivers." This would go a long

FEMA Draft Strategic Plan Comment Form (for FEMA NAC) – February 2008



FEMA

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Leadership	n/a	Jim Paturas	way to a more descriptive identification of other members of the emergency response community that includes hospitals, public health and other healthcare delivery organizations.
			Mentioned as a big issue in several sections in this document, yet there is minimal information identified on any strategies to develop this in FEMA staff. Management and leadership is a huge issue across the whole EM field and FEMA could enhance their credibility across the country if they actually developed a successful leadership training/mentoring/development programs. It should be spelled out more specifically than "career development", as it is currently listed, especially since there is minimal specificity on the rest of the workforce development issues.
Goal 4: Workforce	n/a	Jim Paturas	Focuses only on the development of employees.
Goal 1: Integrated approach to national capabilities	20	Jim Paturas	Only talks about developing qualified personnel through more "certifications". That addresses knowledge of EM, but not how to develop managers.
Goal 1: Integrated approach to national capabilities	13-14	Jim Paturas	Strategy B on p. 13 and Strategy C on p. 14 would really benefit from being written differently. The way it is worded now, it almost reads as if FEMA is going to tell local communities what to do, or will do it for them. Maybe a more definitive verb other than "working with" or "ensure".
Goal 4: Workforce	33	Jim Paturas	Strategy C talks about "career advancement"; does this include management training?
Goal 5: Organizational Culture	37	Jim Paturas	Refers to "metrics" to measure "achieving established performance goals" - maybe something added to the focus of the performance goals to measure management.
Plan Implementation	44	Jim Paturas	The document refers to a statement that says "results matter", yet there is no mention of how to measure the results of either leadership training or management decisions (no strategy to develop metrics).
Miscellaneous	n/a	Jim Paturas	How does FEMA define success? Besides a couple of employee specific metrics, and some exercises, there isn't anything listed. This leaves FEMA open to only ascertaining if their overarching goal of "safer" communities is only going to be tested/confirmed when disaster strikes, in most situations. While it's not feasible to test all communities and regions on all issues, it is worth having a strategy to develop key benchmarks, beyond just the grant programs?
Miscellaneous	n/a	Angelia Elgin	How will marketing FEMA as the "NEW FEMA" be handled with the public and private sector?
Turning Vision to Reality	6	Angelia Elgin	Under "Supporting Strategies" can we put "Shape a Diverse, Talented Workforce"?



FEMA Draft Strategic Plan Comment Form (for FEMA NAC) – February 2008

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Overarching Themes	8	Angelina Elgin	Under “Compassionate program and service delivery to all populations” can we consider including the pediatric population?
Overarching Themes	9	Angelina Elgin	Recommend adding a “public/private groups, private sector”
Goal 1: Integrated approach to national capabilities	13	Angelina Elgin	Strategy B – “Vulnerable populations” needs to be defined.
Goal 1: Integrated approach to national capabilities	17	Angelina Elgin	Strategy C – Recommend adding “private sectors/groups”
Goal 2: Assistance	24-27	Angelina Elgin	I believe we need to define “Special Needs Populations”. There needs to be a “baseline” definition. Too many governmental entities have several definitions of “special needs”. I believe FEMA should be the lead on defining “special needs”.
Goal 2: Assistance	24	Angelina Elgin	On page 24 in the last sentence there is discussion regarding “public reliance on ...timely emergency management...before and during national incidents and emergencies”. How will FEMA address issues of complaints of bias and racism in how emergency operations/deployment are done during a disaster? e.g. Delivery of food, water, etc.
Goal 3: Provide reliable information at the right time to all users	31	Angelina Elgin	What are some evaluation bench marks that would evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of the IT program?
Goal 4: Workforce	32	Angelina Elgin	I believe it is great to empower the FEMA workforce, but in Objective 4.1, Strategy C, can you consider “while maintaining a diverse workforce (or diversity).”
Goal 4: Workforce	32	Angelina Elgin	Very carefully thought out program and process. I like the recognition of personal and professional development.
Plan Implementation	41	Angelina Elgin	FEMA Component Strategic Plan; Are the RACs responsible for this component? If not, how will this plan be aligned at the Regional Level?